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[Redacted]  
By email: [Redacted]

Our ref: FOI2024/15965  
25 September 2024

Dear [Redacted]

**REQUEST FOR INFORMATION: Employees' leave and employment information  
Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA)**

Thank you for your request for information of 29 August 2024 about employees' leave and employment information for the APHA. We have handled your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

Your information request and our response are set out below.

*Could you provide copies of the following documents.*

- *Template of the employment contract issued to new employees*
- *Your pay policy*
- *Your maternity policy*
- *Your paternity policy*
- *Your pay bands / grades / scales for the years 2022-23 and 2023-24*

We attach the following documents within scope of this part of your request:

Annex C- APHA contract template (for permanent employees)

Annex D- Pay policy

Annex E- Maternity policy

Annex F- Paternity policy

Pay ranges for 2023/24 – this document also shows the ranges for 2022/23 (see pre award min and max on the document)- for this information please see the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/defra-pay-and-conditions-202324-foi202322273>

As this information is reasonably accessible to you by other means, section 21 of the FOIA exempts Defra from providing a copy of the information with this response to your request.

*Could you also confirm:*

- *Whether employees are allowed to buy and sell annual leave.  
If so, how many days?*

There is no provision for employees to buy and sell annual leave.

- *How many days of annual leave employees can carry over from one year to the next?*

Employees can carry over 10 days annual leave from one year to the next.

- The number of days employees are allowed to volunteer for (paid)?

Employees can do paid volunteer leave for 3 days per year.

- *The number of days employees are allowed to volunteer for (unpaid)?*

There is no allowance specifically for unpaid volunteering leave.

- *Sickness entitlement of employees e.g. months paid at the full rate, half rate, what qualifying period?*

Please see attached Annex G.

- Whether the organisation closes between Xmas and New Year

The organisation does not close between Christmas and New Year.

- *If so, whether the days between Xmas and New Year are part of your employees annual leave allowance?*

As the organisation does not close between Christmas and New Year, if employees wish to have annual leave at that time, they need to follow the normal process for requesting annual leave.

- % employer pension contributions
- % employee pension contributions
- retirement age of pension scheme

This information is published online and can be viewed at the link below:

<https://www.civilservicepensionscheme.org.uk/your-pension/managing-your-pension/contribution-rates/>

As the information is reasonably accessible to you by other means, section 21 of the FOIA exempts Defra from providing a copy of the information with this response to your request.

Information disclosed in response to this FOIA request is releasable to the public. In keeping with the spirit and effect of the FOIA and the government's Transparency Agenda, this letter and the information disclosed to you may be placed on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk), together with any related information that will provide a key to its wider context. No information identifying you will be placed on the GOV.UK website.

We attach Annex A, explaining the copyright that applies to the information being released to you, and Annex B giving contact details should you be unhappy with the service you have received.

If you have any queries about this letter please contact us.

Yours sincerely

[Redacted]

**Information Rights Team**

[InformationRequests@defra.gov.uk](mailto:InformationRequests@defra.gov.uk)

## **Annex A**

### **Copyright**

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## **Annex B**

### **Complaints**

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request you may make a complaint or appeal against our decision under section 17(7) of the FOIA or under regulation 11 of the EIRs, as applicable, within 40 working days of the date of this letter. Please write to Vanessa Drury Head of Information Rights via email at [InformationRequests@defra.gov.uk](mailto:InformationRequests@defra.gov.uk) and they will arrange for an internal review of your case. Details of Defra's complaints procedure are on our website.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, section 50 of the FOIA and regulation 18 of the EIRs gives you the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) for a decision. Please note that generally the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have first exhausted Defra's own complaints procedure.

The ICO can be contacted using the following link:

<https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/official-information-concerns-report/official-information-concern/>